

POLICY HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOLS

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DIOCESE OF DALLAS
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

“Let bishops, therefore, make every effort to have the faithful actively support and promote the work of evangelization and the apostolate.” (*Christus Dominus*, #6)

“... there is need for the ministry of the word, if the Gospel is to reach all. The bishop should be, first and foremost, a herald of faith, leading new disciples to Christ. In order that he may properly fulfill this outstanding task, let him be thoroughly aware of the conditions of his flock.”
(*Ad gentes*, #20)

“In the exercise of his pastoral office a diocesan bishop is to show that he is concerned with all the Christian faithful who are committed to his care regardless of age, condition, or nationality.”
(*Code of Canon Law*, #3381,1)

DIOCESAN VISION STATEMENT

We, the personnel of the Diocese of Dallas, are Servant-Leaders who assist the bishop in carrying out his pastoral role of herald of the faith. We accept the call to serve all of God's people beginning with the poor and the marginated. We proclaim the Gospel to all peoples and build up the Church, the Body of Christ, for the sake of the Kingdom. Our special focus is the family in all its diverse expressions, the multicultural reality of the Church, and justice as a constitutive element of the Gospel.

We provide opportunities for personal and spiritual enrichment in order to maximize our gifts and talents for the sake of the mission. We minimize division by building unity through respect, trust, dialogue, and ownership. We respect and support the priests by establishing effective communication and facilitation of their ministry. We serve parishes, enabling them to provide quality service for all peoples.

In order to accomplish this vision, responding to changing needs, we commit to a collaborative effort in using resources and in designing plans and programs. This calls for the various components within the Church's total ministry to unite themselves in a closer working relationship for the sake of the common good. It also calls for the renewal of structures at the diocesan and parish levels that can be instrumental in the implementation and evaluation of plans and programs.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas exist as the Church's response to the Gospel message, “TO TEACH AS JESUS DID.” Each school espouses Catholic doctrine and the spirit of Vatican II in worship, community, justice, and social concerns. For a school to be Catholic, it must be seen, and it must see itself as an integral part of the Church's mission to spread God's word and to bring all peoples to Christ, helping them to grow in faith and love. A school is designated a “Catholic” school only if it is canonically so stated by the Bishop of Dallas. The primary reason for Catholic schools to exist is to serve Catholic families in the Diocese of Dallas. All schools are to provide standards of religious and academic quality, maintaining accreditation with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
POLICY HANDBOOK

1000 Series: ADMINISTRATION

Diocesan/Parochial

1000

PHILOSOPHY

Catholic education transcends the realm of the immediate and is a total development of the Catholic family, through the engendering of Catholic convictions. Involvement of Religious and laity, according to the recent document of the Church is imperative. Gospel awareness, personal responsibility, assimilation of cultures, creativity within the individual, maximum utilization of talent, civic concern, positive societal values, and attitudes, and comprehension of the emerging world community of Christ are expected outcomes of quality Catholic education.

1001

DIOCESAN BISHOP

The Bishop of Dallas is the primary educator of the diocese. All policies and practices in the catechetical and educational programs of the diocese are subject to the approval of the Bishop.

1002

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

The bishop appoints, in consultation with the appropriate parties, the Director of Catholic Schools. The Director is the official representative of the bishop. The Director administers and supervises school-based catechetical and educational programs of the diocese in early childhood, elementary, and secondary education programs. The Director serves as the bishop's representative to TCCED (Texas Catholic Conference Education).

1003

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR

The director is to possess the following:

1. At least a Master's degree in Education or a Master's degree with 30 hours in Education, ten years experience in Catholic schools, five of those years must have been in administration, and an Administrative Certificate or its equivalency.
2. Ability to work with the Diocesan Cabinet, pastors, and principals.
3. Be a practicing Catholic, with proven leadership in maintaining Catholic Philosophy of school.
4. Communication skills, which include:
 - Sensitivity to public relations,
 - Ability at public speaking,

- Ability to compose and write well,
 - Ability to take constructive criticism without becoming defensive.
5. Leadership skills that include:
 - Professional positive attitude,
 - High intellectual ability,
 - Desirable interpersonal relations skills,
 - Experience in maintaining Catholic Philosophy in schools,
 - Ability to delegate authority,
 - Ability to think clearly, logically and rapidly in a crisis.
 6. Administrative skills that include
 - Ability to take decisive action,
 - Consistency in carrying out decisions,
 - Ability in long-range planning,
 - Ability in budgeting and financial management,
 - Ability in financial development.

1004

DUTIES OF DIRECTOR

The Director is the chief educational administrator engaged by the Bishop. As such, the Director shall:

1. Act as Bishop's representative to the TCCED,
2. Preside over meeting of the Diocesan Catholic School Advisory Council,
3. Assist in formulating diocesan policy pertaining to schools and to education and in directing the implementation of such policy,
4. Attend and make reports to the Cabinet as requested by the Bishop,
5. Guide and coordinate the accreditation process for all the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Dallas,
6. Hire the staff for Catholic School Office (CSO) central administration,
7. Coordinate and supervise CSO operations,
8. Budget for CSO operations and monitor the expenditures of that budget,
9. Give direction in financial accountability to local schools,
10. Facilitate an annual performance review for all professional personnel in the Catholic schools system,
11. Create an atmosphere for professional growth and provide the mechanism for personnel development for all employees,
12. Consult with other diocesan agencies whenever possible,
13. Assist in providing an equality of educational opportunities,
14. Study and implement government mandated programs as needed,
15. Be knowledgeable of educational trends in programming and movements toward educational excellence,
16. Regularly attend conventions and professional meetings to remain up-to-date in the field of education,
17. Be knowledgeable in school law (both state and federal),
18. Be knowledgeable of the standards of accreditation and all other mandates and expectations relating to the CSO,

19. Regularly appraise the existing educational and religious programs in the schools and create an atmosphere for innovative development of future educational programs.

1010

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

The purpose of the CSO is to monitor and assure all schools' implementation of TCCED policies; assist in the continuous growth pattern of education based on Catholic principles; be a resource and research arm of the schools; and mediate relations between and among all entities related to the schools.

1011

GOALS OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

- To facilitate effective Catholic education in the Diocese of Dallas,
- To encourage the development of faith communities,
- To support site-based decision making by assistance to pastors, principals and school councils,
- To provide encouragement and opportunities for school leaders to become involved in civic activities,
- To keep lines of communication open between pastors, principals, schools councils, and the CSO,
- To promote and encourage leadership at the local level,
- To provide and help conduct in-service workshops for staff development at Diocesan and local level,
- To enforce TCCED regulations to assure continuous state accreditation,
- To encourage academic excellence at all levels,
- To communicate with and work collaboratively with the Office of Catechesis and the Office of Youth Ministry
- To remain current with newest trends and latest information in education and disseminate this information to the professionals in the field,
- To accumulate and analyze statistical and professional data and communicate the results,
- To maintain an-updated curriculum library with textbooks and technology materials,
- To establish and be accountable to the budget,
- To raise the awareness level of diversity of ethnic cultures present in the system and be sensitive to them,
- To extend government programs in the schools whenever possible.

1012

POLICY MANUAL

The Diocese of Dallas Catholic School Policy Manual will be evaluated at least yearly, and revised according to needs. The provisions contained in this Policy Manual are the policies, practices, and guidelines for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Dallas. The policies, practices, and guidelines that make up the Policy

Manual are, without notice, subject to change, revision, and/or withdrawal by the Diocese of Dallas. Nothing in this Policy Manual shall be construed to vest an employee with any contractual rights.

1020

DIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ADVISORY COUNCIL (DCSAC)

The Diocesan Catholic Schools Advisory Council is advisory to the Bishop, the Director of Schools, and appropriate Cabinet members in the administration of the Catholic Schools Office.

The Council will be consulted in the following areas:

- Policies relating to the development and operation of the schools,
- Review of any school program referred to the Council or any school related problem which has become Diocesan in scope,
- Development of programs for future planning and fiscal security of schools,
- Opening and closing of any elementary, middle or secondary school.

1021

MEMBERSHIP ON DCSAC

The Council will be composed of standing members and at-large members. Standing members will be: (1) Director of Catholic Schools who presides; (2) a cabinet member; (3) three pastors who have schools in their parishes; (4) a representative of the Elementary Principals Association; (5) a representative of the High School Principals Association. At-large members may be appointed to represent fields related to the teaching ministry in the Diocese of Dallas. These fields may include psychology, development, finance, law, etc. All Council members will be approved and appointed by the Bishop.

1022

STANDING MEMBER SELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

The Bishop appoints the Cabinet representative to serve on DCSAC.

The Diocesan Presbyteral Council selects the clergy positions on the Advisory Council. One priest should be from the city, one from the suburbs, and one from a rural area. Each term (July 1-June 30) will be for a three-year period with the option of a second term of service. Clergy representatives may serve no more than two consecutive complete terms.

The elementary principals shall elect an elementary principal to serve on the Advisory Council. Likewise, the high school principals will elect a high school principal or president to serve on the Advisory Council. The term shall be for one year and may be renewed as often as the electing body chooses.

1023

AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND TERM OF OFFICE

To be an at-large member, one must:

1. Be free to serve without conflict of interest or personal stake.

2. Be unrelated through family or marriage to any other seated member.
3. Be a non-member of any local school council at the time of nomination or when seated as a member of the CSAC.
4. Be free of any financial commitment through service; such as paid employees or those on retainer for the Diocese of Dallas or a local school in the Diocese of Dallas.

The Bishop will appoint persons to be at-large members upon the recommendation of the sitting DCSAC. The DCSAC will make recommendation for appointment(s) at the May meeting.

Each person appointed will serve a three-year term (July 1-June 30). An at-large member will serve no more than two consecutive complete terms.

1024

VACANCIES AND REMOVALS

Vacancy – in case of a resignation of a member, that vacancy will be filled in the same manner as the initial selection.

Removal – Any at-large member who is absent from three consecutive meetings, unless excused by action of the Council, will cease to be a member. An at-large member may be removed from the Council for cause. Actions for removal must be passed by at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the DCSAC membership.

1025

MEMBER ETHICS

Confidentiality is binding in conscience on each member when dealing with personnel issues. This confidentiality is binding during and after membership terms.

Council members have authority only when acting as a Council, legally and in session. Any statement of action of any individual member will not bind the Council except when such statement or action is in pursuance of a specific instruction of the Council.

Diocesan insurance covers Council members when they are acting corporately, discreetly, and in good faith.

1030

CATHOLIC SCHOOL OFFICE POLICY MANUAL

The CSO will publish an organized manual to preserve and communicate policies of the DCSAC.

CSO is responsible for providing updates of this manual to school administrators who in turn provide the updates to pastors and local school councils.

Pastors, school administrators, and school council leadership have a responsibility for maintaining an up-to-date CSO policy manual.

1040

CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS

Schools located in the Diocese of Dallas are classified as parochial, diocesan, or private.

1050

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

A parochial school is a school that is owned by the parish, subsidized by the parish, and shares in the ministry outreach of the parish. All of the school's activities are under the leadership and guidance of the pastor (parochial administrator) of the parish.

1051

PASTOR (PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATOR)

Final responsibility for the catechetical and educational program of a parish rests with the pastor (parochial administrator). Various employed people, commissions, committees, and councils assist the pastor in this ministry.

1051A

PASTORS NEW TO PARISH WITH A SCHOOL

All new pastors assigned to a community with a school will attend an inservice program with the Catholic Schools Office regarding the role of the Pastor in a school community and the Pastor/Principal relationship.

1052

LOCAL SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Every parish housing a parochial school will have a local school council. At least 50% of the council members will be parishioners.

In the case where two or more parishes join to operate one inter-parochial school, membership on this council shall be composed of persons from each of the cooperating parishes. The cooperating parish leadership will develop a process whereby each participating parish is given viable representation on the council.

1053

MEMBERSHIP ON A LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

A member of a parochial school advisory council will not be related by blood (consanguinity) [uncles, aunt, niece, and nephew] within the third degree or by marriage (affinity) [brother-in-law, sister-in-law] within the second degree to any employee of the school or the parish

1060

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

A diocesan school is one where there is no parochial connectedness. The school is operated under the terms of an agreement between the Diocese and the named school. The Bishop, as defined by Canon Law, is the ultimate authority in the school and is represented by the Director of Schools. A chief administrator (head of school) is employed by the Bishop and is empowered to lead the school. Each diocesan school will have an advisory council.

The documents governing the schools authority and the advisory council are maintained at the school.

Schools that are considered Diocesan schools: (1) Bishop Dunne, Dallas (July 1, 1976) (2) Bishop Lynch, Dallas (July 1, 1976), The Highlands, Irving (July 1, 1986) and John Paul II

1061

MEMBERSHIP ON ADVISORY COUNCIL, DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

Membership of the school council should represent the communities served by the school. Membership should include expertise that is beneficial to the operation of the school. A member of a diocesan school advisory council will not be related by blood (consanguinity) [uncles, aunt, niece, and nephew] within the third degree or by marriage (affinity) [brother-in-law, sister-in law] within the second degree to any employee of the school or to any employee of the Catholic Schools Office.

1070

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

A private school is one that exists in the Diocese with the approval of the Bishop. The school is governed and supported by the Religious Order that operates the school. Jesuit, Ursuline, Notre Dame School of Dallas, and Cistercian are such schools.

1080

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

A president, principal, or head of school will be appointed to serve as leader of each elementary or high school.

1090

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION

Each parochial school is responsible for developing and maintaining a philosophy and mission statement consistent with the principles and spirit of Catholic education and with the philosophy and mission of the parish community.

Each diocesan school is responsible for developing and maintaining a philosophy and mission statement consistent with the principles and spirit of Catholic

education as well as with the vision and mission statement of the Diocese of Dallas.

Each private school is responsible for developing and maintaining a philosophy and mission statement consistent with the principles and spirit of Catholic education and with the philosophy and mission of the religious community represented in the school's ownership.

1095

LOCAL POLICY HANDBOOKS

Handbooks will be developed, published, and maintained. There will be a separate handbook for teachers and a separate one for parents/students. Policies contained in these handbooks must be consistent with published diocesan policies.

Every handbook should include a copy of the school's philosophy, mission statement, goals, policies, regulations, and school activities.

A copy of the teacher handbook and a copy of the parent/student handbook will be sent to the CSO annually.

1097

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

Each school, in cooperation with the CSO will comply with TCCED accreditation guidelines, which are recognized and approved by the Texas Education Agency

2000 SERIES: COMMUNITY

2000

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Director of Schools represents the Diocesan education system in relations with governmental agencies, other public and private organizations, and the various entities of the communication media.

Every school will develop guidelines that empower responsibility for public relations activity. The principal is the responsible party for communications that come from the school.

2010

SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

School support organizations and budgets of these organizations are under the direct jurisdiction of the school's chief administrator.

2020

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Visitors to a school will report to the school office. Schools will have sign-in stations that name visitors on campus at any specified time. Each school will develop a written procedure that defines the parameters of visitation.

2030

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Schools will not release information regarding students or parents for the purpose of commercial or promotional solicitation without parental approval.

2040

SOLICITATIONS

Fund-raising and solicitation activities will be pre-approved by the chief administrator of the school.

2050

USE OF SCHOOL AND PARISH FACILITIES

Social or community use of the educational center, excluding parish-sponsored activities, can not interfere with the educational program of the school

2060

STUDENT RELEASE FOR NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

The principal is the only person authorized to release students from class for non-instructional/catechetical activities. Each principal will develop a process to address these releases from class.

2070

TUITION AND STUDENT RECORDS

Each school will develop a procedure that will support tuition collection. Tuition and fees will be current at all times.

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3000 SERIES: LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCILS AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS

3000

PRINCIPLES REGARDING ADVISORY COUNCILS – MEMBERSHIP

School Advisory Councils will develop membership criteria that reflect the characteristics of the parish community. Employees of the school or parish will not be eligible for School Advisory Council membership.

For cause and for the good of the school and parish community, a pastor may remove a person from the parochial school's advisory council. Likewise, the Director of Schools may remove a person for cause from a Diocesan school advisory council if there is cause.

3001

MEMBERSHIP ON SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL SHOULD REFLECT MEMBERSHIP IN THE SCHOOL

It is recommended that the composite of the school advisory council include (1) representation of parents of students attending the school; (2) representation of areas of service needed for the school; (3) representation that supports gender and ethnic balance; and (4) representation of fields of expertise that can support the furtherance of the school.

3010

FUNCTION OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The school advisory council develops policy that supports mission effectiveness of the school. Local policy will not be in conflict with diocesan policy.

3020

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

Each year the advisory council will conduct a self-assessment. The assessment will be based on the roles and responsibilities of the council as defined in the constitution of the council.

3030

ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR

The school advisory council participates in the annual assessment of the school's chief administrator. In parochial schools, this participation is at the request of the pastor. The basis of this assessment will be the functions of the administrator as outlined in diocesan policy, the administrative contract, and the locally approved job description.

3040**NEW CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

New construction or major expansion of existing educational facilities of any parochial or diocesan school is subject to review by the Diocesan Planning Board and the Catholic Schools Office. The Bishop is the only person empowered to give final approval for new construction or major renovation.

3044**OPENING NEW SCHOOLS**

New Catholic schools planning to open within the Diocese are to present their request formally to the Director of Schools, documenting the desire and need for the school. A time-period will be created to determine feasibility, staffing, enrollment, facilities, financial stability, and proposed budget. The Director will take the recommendation to the Bishop and the Bishop is the only person who can make the decision to open a new school.

3046**CHANGES AND ADJUSTMENTS TO SCHOOL STRUCTURE**

The Director of Schools must approve additions or deletion of grades served. To obtain approval, a plan will be presented to the Director no later than April 1, preceding the fall opening of the school year. The Director will bring the recommendations to the Bishop and only the Bishop can determine additions or subtractions of classes.

3047**CLOSING OF SCHOOLS**

Only the Bishop can approve the closing of a school. For such approval, a request must be submitted to the Bishop, through the Director of Schools, that addresses the following:

1. Reasons for closing
2. Factual substantial information leading up to the decision
3. Evidence of consultation with concerned parents, and
4. Plans for routing students who are affected to other Catholic schools.

Requests to close a school must be submitted to the Director of Schools no later than December 1 of the academic year before which the closing is anticipated.

3050**ANNUAL BUDGET**

Each school will prepare, and file with the CSO, an operational budget, approved by the pastor and the school advisory council, before the beginning of each scholastic year

3052

ANNUAL REPORT

Each school will file an annual report with the Diocese of Dallas, Business Office, and the Catholic Schools Office at the completion of the fiscal year. That report will arrive at the CSO no later than August 30 of each year.

3057

DEVELOPMENT OFFICE AND ALUMNI OFFICE

Each school will have a Development and Alumni program.

3060

PER CAPITA SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

A per capita school assessment is levied annually on each school for the general operation of the Catholic Schools Office. The Diocese sets the assessment amount. The per capita assessment will be announced no later than December 1 of an existing school year for the next school year.

4000 SERIES: PERSONNEL

4000

RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS AND STAFF

The CSO and the local school will make every effort to secure qualified personnel through a planned and effective recruitment program.

4001

HIRING OF A NEW TEACHER TO A SCHOOL

In the employment process of a new teacher to a school the principal will have a completed application for employment. The principal will also contact CSO to assure verification of eligibility to teach in the Catholic schools of the Diocese. It is expected that new hires meet TCCED standards and that they are quality teachers to support student learning.

4002

TEACHER APPLICATION

Applications for a teaching position in the Diocese of Dallas will be completed on a form provided by the CSO. Official applications are kept in the personnel office of the CSO.

4004

PRINCIPAL APPLICATION

Applications for a principal position in the Diocese of Dallas will be completed on a form provided by the CSO. Complete applications will be sent to the personnel office of the CSO. The Director of Schools will interview all candidates for the position of principal. When approved by the Director, that candidate's name will be added to the list of available candidates.

4006

DISPOSITIONS OF APPLICATIONS

All applications for professional employment will be retained in an active file for a six-month period. After six months, applications will be maintained in an inactive file for an additional six months. A potential employee is to notify the CSO if the individual wishes to extend the active file status.

4007

VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY / I-9 FORM

The principal will verify employment eligibility within three working days of actual employment for all persons hired after November 6, 1986. This is done by examination of documents, establishing identity and employment authorization and the completion of the I-9 form.

4008

CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD

All potential school employees will complete the safe environment personnel forms and complete the screening process of the Diocese of Dallas.

The CSO will be provided the criminal history record of all employees of the school, volunteers, and all coaches.

Effective with the 2003-2004 school year, the criminal history record check will be repeated at least ever other year.

4010

CONTRACTS

Full-time teachers and school administrators will be under official contract. There is no tenure in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Dallas. The Teacher contracts are tendered for one year. The earliest beginning of a contract is July 1. All yearly contracts end June 30. Principal contracts may be tendered for up to three years, beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30 of stated year. Teacher contracts are valid only if signed by the principal. Parochial school principal contracts are valid only if signed by the pastor of the parish. Diocesan school principal contracts are valid only if signed by the bishop. All other employment is "at will".

4011

CONTRACT RECONSIDERATION

The pastor will provide an intent-to-return form for the next school year to the principal by December 1 of a given school year. The principal will provide intent-to-return forms for the next school year to teachers by February 1 of a given school year. Intent to return forms are non-binding on any of the parties involved.

By December 1 of the last year on an existing contract, the Director of Schools will provide an intent-to-return form to chief administrators of diocesan schools.

Thirty days may be allotted for response, at the discretion of the person providing the form.

4012

CONTRACT OFFERING DATE

Principals will be offered renewal of contracts, or receive written notice of non-renewal, no later than March 1. Teachers will be offered renewal of contracts, or receive written notice of non-renewal, no later than May 1.

4013

| _____ **CONTRACT SIGNING DATE**

Principal contracts must be signed before April 15. A signed copy of the contract is to be sent to CSO by May 1. Teacher contracts are to be signed before June 1, unless the date is changed by mutual consent. Failure of the teacher to return the signed contract by June 1, or a mutually consented date, will result in that teacher's position being determined to be vacant and subject to be filled by another person.

| _____ **4014**

TERMINATION OF CONTRACTED EMPLOYEE FOR CAUSE

A contracted employee may be terminated during the term of an existing contract for cause, as defined in the contract. The pastor (parochial schools) or the Director (diocesan schools) is authorized to terminate the chief administrator of the school. The principal is authorized to terminate contracted employees in the school. The Director (parochial schools) or the Bishop (diocesan schools) shall be notified in advance whenever possible of the impending action. Written approval from the Bishop or the Director of Schools should be secured before the contract is terminated.

| _____ **4015**

FIRST YEAR LIMITATIONS

The first year of an individual's employment with a school is probationary. Diocesan grievance and appeals process for the review of an employment decision during that time is inapplicable.

| _____ **4016**

CONTRACT VERIFICATION

In order to substantiate qualifications, the following documentation must be on file at the local school and in the CSO:

1. *Standard diocesan application* – including names and addresses of schools and districts of previous employment
2. *Transcripts* – undergraduate and graduate (if applicable); the official transcript will be on file at the school of employment with a copy in the CSO, and
3. *Teaching certificate* (if applicable) - copy reflecting most current certified area. An official Texas certificate will be printed off the TEA website.

| _____ **4017**

YEARS OF SERVICE

One full year of credit will be granted for service of 140 to 180 teaching days within an academic year.

One half year of credit will be granted for service of 70 to 139 teaching days within an academic year.

A teaching day is defined as one lasting the full duration of the regular school day.

4018**CONTRACT INTERFERENCE**

No principal will offer employment to a teacher who is contracted to another school in the Diocese of Dallas. A teacher is committed to a Diocesan school for the contract term once the contract is signed.

4019**NON-CONTRACTUAL "AT-WILL" EMPLOYEES**

At-will employees include, but are not limited to, support staff, part-time support personnel, secretaries, instructional assistants and aides, clinic managers, bookkeepers, technology managers and maintenance personnel.

4021**PRINCIPAL EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

1. In December, a packet of assessment material (including procedural steps, criteria, and forms) will be sent to the person designated to facilitate the procedure.
2. The assessment will be completed by the end of January.
3. Completed assessment forms will be returned to the Director of Schools, marked "confidential", no later than February 1.
4. The CSO personnel coordinator compiles and collates the responses.
5. The pastor and the Director of Schools meet with the principal to review performance and assessment.
6. A compiled copy of the assessment is given to the pastor and the principal.

4022**TEACHER EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

Each employee will be evaluated and provided a written summation of that evaluation at least once a year.

1. The principal, before the formal evaluation, will make at least one formal classroom observation. The results of the observation(s) will be shared in writing with the teacher. This communication will happen no later than the formal evaluation meeting. All observations should include strengths as well as areas of growth.
2. By April 15 of a contract year, formal evaluation of each teacher will be completed.
3. The Diocesan standard form, unless another form is approved by the Director of Schools, will be used in evaluation.
4. A copy of the evaluation, co-signed by the principal and the teacher, is given to the teacher and one is retained in the teacher's personnel folder at the school and does not follow the teacher.
5. First year teachers at a school will have a formal evaluation done in each semester of that first year.

4023

| _____NON-CONTRACTUAL "AT WILL" EMPLOYEES EVALUATION

1. Observations will be made as deemed appropriate by the principal.
2. By May 1, a written evaluation will be offered to each employee.

4024

TERMINATION OF NON-CONTRACT EMPLOYEES

A non-contract employee may be terminated at any time. Before termination takes place, the person terminating shall discuss the need with a superior.

Questions that will be clarified in the discussion are:

- Has the employee engaged in a serious offense warranting discharge,
- Has a progressive discipline and warning process been followed to give an employee reasonable opportunity to improve?

Each employee whose services have been terminated will be advised of the option to appeal the termination through the Diocesan Appeal Procedure.

4025

IMMEDIATE TERMINATION WITHOUT NOTICE - URGENCY

Employment may be terminated without notice for the following (included but not limited to) offenses. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. No employee will be terminated without the chief administrator having conversation with the Director of Schools. The employee could be suspended, without pay, pending such conversation. Appeal will not be allowed for termination relating to any of these instances.

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse,
- Possession, transfer, sale, use, or distribution of a controlled substance or illegal drug,
- Consumption of any amount of alcoholic beverage while on duty,
- Excessive abuse of alcoholic beverages that affects ability to perform duties as determined by school or diocesan leadership,
- Illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds,
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position,
- Commission of a crime occurring in whole or in part on school property or at a school sponsored event,
- Conviction at the trial-court level of any felony or any other crime, involving moral turpitude,
- Physical or mental incapacity preventing performance of the job description, after any accommodation required by law,
- Any act or conduct while at school, in or out of the classroom, which is either indecent, obscene, cruel, abusive,
- Any type of physical or verbal abuse of students, parents, or co-workers,

- Situation where retention is detrimental to the best interest of the students and/or parents as determined by the school's chief educational leader.

4026

CONTRACT TERMINATION BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT

A contract may be terminated, in accordance with contract terms, by mutual written agreement by the contracting parties.

4027

INTERIM PRINCIPAL

A pastor, in consultation with the Director of Schools, may appoint a person to serve as interim principal for a school as the situation demands.

4028

NEPOTISM

No person will be employed who is related by blood (consanguinity) [uncle, aunt, niece, and nephew] within the third degree or by marriage (affinity) [brother-in-law, sister-in-law] within the second degree to the principal or to any local school advisory council member unless the Director of Schools approves the employment.

4039

EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPAL

Employment of a Principal at a parochial school will be made by the pastor, in consultation with the Director of Schools and a Search committee created by the Pastor to help him in the selection.

4040

PRINCIPAL

The principal is the spiritual leader of the school community. The principal is the primary catechist whose first responsibility is the implementation of the Catholic Philosophy of Education. The principal carries out the mission of the Church by:

- Communicating the Christian message,
- Building a faith community,
- Fostering the life of Christian service,
- Providing opportunity for Christian worship,

The principal is the academic leader of the school community. As such, the principal is responsible for supervision and administration.

Duties of supervision include, but are not limited to:

- Curriculum development and classroom instruction,
- Dialogue with teachers, parents and students,
- Staff development for faculty and staff,
- Continued conversation with CSO.

Duties of administration include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing TCCED standards, Diocesan guidelines, and pastoral directives,
- Maintaining reporting documents, record-keeping, and written communications in good condition,
- Judicious delegation of responsibility,
- Adequate scheduling and faculty meetings,
- Overseeing the school budget,
- Coordinating family related activities,
- Promoting good public relations,
- Open communication with pastor, school advisory council, CSO, parents, and others interested in the school.

The pastor, with the advice of the Director of Schools, hires the principal in a parochial school. CSO participates in the process of recruitment and interview of applicants. The Bishop hires the chief administrator of a diocesan school. The Director of Schools will help facilitate recruitment and interviews.

4041

PRINCIPAL CREDENTIALS

Principals will be practicing Catholics who meet all TCCED personnel requirements, and have a minimum of three years teaching experience. Only the Director of Schools can grant exceptions.

4042

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The assistant principal will perform duties assigned by the principal.

4043

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CREDENTIALS

The assistant principals will be a graduate of an approved college or university and have professional education course-work. The assistant principal agrees to pursue a master's degree and 18 hours in educational administration that is required for Principalship.

4044

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Every school will have a person designated with the responsibility of coordinating religious education in the school. The principal will solicit the approval of the pastor before the appointment of this person. In an elementary school, the principal may be the religious education coordinator. This person answers to the principal.

4045

TEACHER CREDENTIALS – TCCED REQUIREMENTS

A special effort will be made to hire practicing Catholics.

Teachers are expected to meet TCCED personnel requirements. As such, teachers will perform the duties outlined in Teacher Competencies (TCCED). In addition, departmentalized teachers in grades 6-8 will possess 18 college hours in the area of teaching assignment. Teachers in grades 9-12 will possess 24 hours in the area of teaching assignment. Specialized instructor certificates are approved on a year-to-year basis. The requirements are listed in the TCCED Accreditation Manual

4060

RELIGION TEACHERS

Religion teachers (full-or part-time) will be able to demonstrate evidence of knowledge of the Catholic faith. Religion teachers will be practicing Catholics and willing to engage in an ongoing process of religious professional growth.

4061

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

The principal shall implement the Adult Faith Formation Program as developed by the Catholic Schools Office for all teachers and aides in the school. The principal may invite (and it is recommended to do so) support staff to be part of the Adult Faith Formation program in the school. Participation in Adult Faith Formation, as developed by the Catholic Schools Office, satisfies the need for teachers in the Diocese of Dallas meeting the Religion Certification program of TCCED.

4063

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

A substitute will provide classroom instruction for a time on a non-contract basis. The principal hires the substitute. Qualification requirements for the position of substitute will comply with TCCED standards.

4064

NURSE

Schools will comply with TCCED requirements concerning providing health services and the employment of a school nurse. Schools should, if possible, hire a registered nurse with current state licensing.

4065

LIBRARIAN

Schools will comply with TCCED requirements regarding employment of a school librarian.

4066

COUNSELOR

Schools will comply with TCCED requirements regarding employment of a school counselor.

4067**BUS DRIVERS**

Bus drivers will be employed by the school principal and will possess appropriate credentials:

- Proof that the driver is at least 18 years of age,
- Class “A” or Class “B” driver’s license,
- Pass annual physical exam,
- Evidence of safe driving record, and
- Selected and approved by principal as a person of responsibility,
- Successful annual participation in public safety driving program.

4068**EMPLOYEES DRIVING STUDENTS**

No employee, in a personal vehicle, will drive students to/from school related activities

4070**PROFESSIONAL RECORDS ON FILE AT EACH SCHOOL**

The local school principal will maintain:

- Official diocesan employment application forms,
- Official proof of proper credentials, including official transcripts with signature of registrar plus the date and degree awarded, copies of any certification or license bearing the seal of the college or university,
- Official diocesan contract (professional personnel only),
- Official service recorded and any required attachments,
- Teaching schedule and other teaching assignments,
- Attendance record.
- Performance evaluation (current and past years),
- Professional development plan and inservice record,
- Copy of I-9 Immigration form,
- Deficiency form(s) signed by the Director of Schools, if applicable (professional personnel only),
- Criminal background-check completion letter from CSO,
- Religious certification or signed deficiency form and “Basic Qualification Plan” for Religion teachers,
- Computer literacy credentials where applicable,
- Job description,
- Extracurricular responsibilities,
- Safe environment screening form.

4080

SALARIES

Schools will follow the minimum standardized salary scale for teachers as set forth by the CSO and signed by the Bishop. Schools unable to meet the minimum standard will acquire approval for a waiver from the Director of Schools.

4081

HEALTH AND DENTAL BENEFITS

All full-time personnel will be enrolled in the approved diocesan health and dental insurance plan. The school pays the premium for the employee. Dependent coverage is available and is paid in full by the employee. Part-time employees (those working less than 30 hours per week) are not entitled to health and dental benefits.

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) benefit extensions do not apply to church related institutions. At the same time, similar benefit extensions will be made available at the employee's expense. Persons terminated for cause are not eligible for benefits.

4082

RETIREMENT PLAN

All full-time personnel are entitled to a 3% employer salary contribution on their behalf to the diocesan approved 403 (B) defined contribution retirement plan, once they have completed one full year of approved diocesan service. The employee is vested 15% into the retirement plan after two years of approved diocesan service, 35% after three years, 65% after four years and 100% after five years.

Full-time personnel may contribute to the retirement plan separately. Each diocesan location is encouraged to match at least 2% of the employee's contribution.

4083

WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

All employees are covered by worker's compensation insurance

4084

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Church-related schools in Texas are not required by law to participate in the State Unemployment Compensation Program. Therefore, employees are not entitled to unemployment benefits.

4085

| _____ **LEAVE – PERSONAL, EMERGENCY, EXCEPTIONAL**

Each school is to develop a leave policy. The Director will review and approve that policy. Leave can be used either for personal illness or illness within the family of an immediate family member (spouse or child - natural or stepchild).

Leave, under this provision, will be counted against the school's sick leave policy even if a substitute is not employed.

At the discretion of the principal, leave may be granted to attend to the illness of other family members.

Each school will develop a policy regarding the distribution of leave days.

| _____ **4087**

LEAVE – PART-TIME PERSONNEL

Part-time personnel earn leave on a pro-rata basis; example may be one day of leave for every 30 days of work. Part-time personnel who work less than 50% of any given day are not entitled to leave.

| _____ **4088**

ACCUMULATION OF SICK LEAVE

Each school will have a policy regarding accumulation of leave days.

| _____ **4090**

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Eligible personnel – persons who have completed one year of service or 1250 hours of on the job experience - may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during the school year (August 1 of a calendar year through July 31 of the next calendar year) for the following reason:

1. Birth, placement for adoption or foster care,
2. Serious health condition of a spouse, child, or parent,
3. Employee's own serious health condition.

If the leave is foreseeable (birth or adoption), an employee will give the employer at least 30 days notice. Employers may require employees to use accrued paid leave (including paid vacation, sick leave, and personal days) during the 12-week leave period.

Each school is to develop policy regarding return from FMLA and communicate that policy to the employee prior to FLMA happening.

| _____ **4091**

MAJOR MEDICAL LEAVE

Each school will have a policy regarding pregnancy leave. This policy will be equally applied to adoption.

In case of a major medical leave condition, each school will have a policy regarding paid and un-paid time-off. All leave is subject to continuing verification with a physician's statement.

4092

SPECIAL LEAVE

Leave with pay will be granted because of an emergency requiring the employee's presence.

- Period of bereavement – emergency leave up to five days will be provided in the event of death in the immediate family (parent, spouse, child, sibling). Attendance at other funerals will be granted at the discretion of the principal.
- Jury duty – leave with pay will be granted for jury duty. A record of days served, verified by the central jury bailiff, should be submitted to the principal.

4093

PROFESSIONAL/PERSONAL LEAVE

The principal may grant professional leave during normal working hours for employees to attend classes, seminars, and/or conferences, etc.

4094

TEMPORARY DISABILITY

Upon appropriate request to the principal by an employee, the principal will grant a leave of absence to an employee for temporary disability at any time the employee's condition interferes with the performance of regular duties. The request will be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work, the date the employee requests the leave to begin and probable date of the employee's return. Unused sick leave is applicable to temporary disabilities and will be used before unpaid leave commences. Unpaid leave of absence for temporary disability will be granted for the full duration of any temporary disability up to 90 calendar days. It is within the discretion of the principal, after review of the documentation, to deny or approve such leave.

The principal may place an employee on leave of absence for temporary disability if the employee's condition interferes with the performance of regular duties. Before this decision is made, the principal shall consult with a licensed physician who has examined the employee or with a licensed mental health care professional who has performed a mental health evaluation. Once on leave, the employee will have the right to present evidence to the principal of fitness to continue assigned duties. The employee will notify the principal in writing of this desire to return to active duty at least 30 days before the expected return date. Such notice will include reports from medical professionals validating the employee's physical or mental health fitness to return to duty, as applicable.

Nothing in this policy is intended to take away from or lessen any rights the employee has under the Family Medical Leave Act and is designed to expand on those rights in any appropriate situation. The employee should review the Diocese's Family Medical Leave Act policy to determine rights under the policy. A copy of that policy may be found at policy #4090 of this manual. In addition,

an employee with a disability who is able to perform duties with reasonable accommodation may have certain rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, which are not intended to be affected by this temporary disability policy.

An employee will not be terminated during a permitted leave of absence for a temporary disability solely for the reason that the employee took such leave.

4097

INSERVICE (PROFESSIONAL) DAYS

Each school will have at least seven teacher in-service days, of at least four hours in length, per year as required by TCCED. Professional inservice days scheduled by the CSO require the attendance of all professional school employees. Local inservice days require the attendance of all professional employees at the local site. At least two of the inservice days will be designated for spiritual formation of the staff.

Regardless of the reason for absence, each missed in-service day will be made up by the employee on their own time. The make up will be documented with the CSO. The employee will also be charged with a day of absence for the inservice day.

4098

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION

A diocesan new teachers' orientation will be held in August of each school year. The CSO will host the new teacher inservice. The diocesan new teacher orientation is mandatory for all employees who meet the definition of new teacher

Local schools shall provide new teacher orientation in a method that is acceptable to the school and the new teacher.

The term "new teacher" refers to any of the following:

- Teachers new to the profession,
- Experienced teachers new to the Diocese of Dallas Catholic schools,
- Teachers with experience in Diocese of Dallas Catholic schools but have taught one semester or less in the past three school years in these schools.

4099

NEW PRINCIPAL ORIENTATION

Orientation for new principals in Diocese of Dallas Catholic schools will take place as early as possible in the summer before the beginning of the new school year. All new principals will attend this orientation.

The term "new principal" refers to the following:

- Principals new to the profession,
- Experienced principals new to the Diocese of Dallas Catholic schools,

- Principals with administrative experience in the Diocese of Dallas Catholic schools who have been in that position a semester or less during the last three years

4100

PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT

All professional staff is responsible for continuous educational growth as required by TCCED.

Diocesan Standard – Principals, teachers and all other staff members will participate in Diocesan and local programs for staff development.

Local Standard – Principals will develop an appropriate staff development program for the local staff.

Principals will attend at least one regional or national conference per year that can enhance personal professional skills. The school budget should reflect funding for this purpose.

4110

PRINCIPAL MEETINGS

All principals will attend and participate in regularly scheduled diocesan principal meetings and inservices.

4115

FACULTY MEETINGS

Each school will have a monthly faculty meeting.

4118

TEACHER PLANNING TIME

Each full-time teacher actively engaged in the instruction of students will have at least 45 minutes within each school day for planning and preparation.

4137

FINAL WARNING

After a professional growth plan has been implemented, any employee may be placed on final warning status for offenses including, but not limited to:

- Not following the terms of the contract,
- Excessive absences or tardiness,
- Unprofessional or illegal conduct,
- Use of profane or abusive language,
- Failure to perform assigned duties efficiently,
- Insubordination.

Reasonable time for improvement will be defined by the principal and communicated to the person being placed on final warning.

If the deficiencies are not corrected in the final warning period, as defined by the principal, termination may result.

4138**FINAL WARNING OF SCHOOL'S CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR**

A principal, president, headmaster may be placed on final warning for a designated time. The pastor will make such a determination concerning the principal of a parochial school. The Director of Schools shall make the determination concerning the chief administrator of a diocesan school. Before a pastor places a principal on final warning, the pastor shall have conversation with the Director of Schools. Likewise, before the Director of Schools places a diocesan school administrator on final warning, the director shall have a conversation with the bishop.

4139**PROBATION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

A principal may place any school employee on probation. The principal will call the Director of Schools to inform CSO of the decision.

4140**REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF)**

After consulting with the Director of Schools, the local school authority may reduce the number of staff because of one of the following reasons:

- Decreased enrollment,
- Loss of revenues,
- Closing of the school,
- Restructuring of school programs, subject areas, or grade levels,
- Subject areas or grade areas being eliminated,
- Department restructuring or reorganization, or
- Termination or revision of state and/or federal grants.

Consideration will be given to seniority at the school. Staff affected should be placed on a priority listing for opening with other schools. The principal must notify the employee in writing 30 days before the reduction. The written notice must include the date of the employee's last day of employment, the reason for the RIF, and the status of benefits.

4141**TERMINATION OF A CONTRACT BY THE EMPLOYEE**

A contract is a written agreement and may not be terminated by the employee without the approval of the employer. The following may be acceptable reasons for termination:

- Spouse transferred out of the area,
- Health reasons documented by a physician,
- Birth of a child, or
- Exceptional personal problems or hardships.

Termination of a contract by an employee without release from the school principal will result in:

- Loss of eligibility to work in a Diocesan school, and

- For TEA certified teachers, a recommendation from CSO to TEA to revoke teacher certification for the remainder of the school year.

4142

NON-CONTRACT EMPLOYEE RESIGNATION

Employees not under contract who find it necessary to end employment will inform the principal in writing of the resignation. The resignation will be given to the principal at least two weeks before the last day of work.

4145

PERSONNEL APPEAL PROCESS

This procedure is provided to give an employee the opportunity to have a school's decision reviewed when there is:

1. Termination of contract or employment.
2. Non-renewal of contract or employment.

Employee submission of a request for a hearing constitutes representation that factual proof is available to support the appeal. It constitutes an appeal to the Diocese of Dallas as the religious authority over the school as communicated in the canons of the Roman Catholic Church. The person filing the appeal shall not be discriminated against. No reprisals shall be taken against the person because of filing a grievance. The appeal process is not a legal process. Participants are not allowed to have legal representation or other parties in advocacy roles at the proceedings. The employer is not obligated to continue paying the grievant during the appeal process for time not worked.

Appeal Level I – Director of Schools

The person making the appeal shall meet with the Director of Schools at the chancery. The Coordinator of School Personnel will attend the appeal hearing. The meeting is an attempt to resolve the issue as informally and reach a solution. This meeting is to be in an atmosphere of cooperative Christian dialogue, not adversarial. The grievant will notify the Director of the intent to appeal, in writing, within five (5) business days of the termination or non-renewal. Failure to give such written notice will cause the decision to be final and not be able to be appealed.

The Director will arrange a meeting with the grievant within 10 business days of receipt of the grievant letter. The principal will give the Director all documentation relating to the matter. The grievant will have the opportunity to explain, defend, or refute the documentation presented by the principal. The Director will review all the information presented and notify both parties of the decision within 10 working days of the appeal hearing.

Appeal Level II – Diocesan Appeals Board

The Diocesan Appeals Board will consist of five members appointed by the Bishop. One of the five will come from the Bishop's cabinet, two of the five will

be principals of schools in the diocese, and two of the five will be teachers in Catholic schools in the diocese. The chair will be the cabinet representative. If the appeal concerns the relationship of a principal and a pastor then the Appeal Board will consist of two priest, either in educational ministry in schools of the Diocese of Dallas or pastors of parishes that house a school and two lay people (principal or teacher) employed in schools in the Diocese.

If the party is not satisfied with the decision of the Director, an appeal to the Diocesan Appeals Board is available. The party shall have five (5) business days, after reception of the Director's opinion, to appeal to the Diocesan Appeals Board. The notice of appeal will be in writing to the Director of Schools. The Director will set a hearing within 15 business days of receipt of the appeal notice. The party will be notified of the hearing at least 10 days before the scheduled hearing. The principal will also be notified of the hearing. Both the parties will be heard on the same day, but at separate meetings.

At the hearing, the principal will present evidence and reasons for actions taken. The principal must demonstrate sufficient cause for the decision. At a separate meeting, the party will be given an opportunity to rebut the evidence and to offer proof and evidence.

The Diocesan Appeals Board will consider only the merits of the case based on relevant and reliable documentation. The Diocesan Appeal Board will deliberate in private. The decision will be the result of a simple majority vote. A letter stating the decision will be sent to the grievant, the Director of Schools, and the principal within five (5) business days from the date the hearing was held.

4150

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Written permission of the Bishop must be given before a religious community is engaged to work in a school. Likewise, written approval of the Bishop has to be received before a religious community is dismissed from a school.

4160

TEACHER SCHEDULE

The principal will determine teacher assignments and schedules.

4170

USE OF ALCOHOL/DRUGS ON CAMPUS

Consumption of alcoholic beverages, at a school function, is forbidden unless approved by the principal. A principal will be allowed to approve the use of alcohol only at functions that do not cater to students.

Illicit use or illegal possession of legal drugs or illegal drugs on school premises while school is in session is unacceptable. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanction up to and including immediate termination.

The principal will determine the sanction. This may include completion of a counseling or rehabilitation program at employee's expense.

4175

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Employees will not engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment toward other employees or students. Sexual harassment is a major breach of professional ethics and will result in disciplinary action or termination.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other sexual conduct - verbal or physical - or any conduct or other offensive unequal treatment of a student, an employee or a group that would not occur but for the sex of the student or employee when:

1. The advances, requests, or conduct have the effect of interfering with the performance of duties or creating an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive work environment.
2. Submission to such advances, or conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or is used as a basis for employment decisions.
3. The advances, requests, or conduct interfere with the performance or promotion of the individual.

Complaint procedure: A person who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment as defined above will bring the matter to the attention of the principal or the immediate supervisor. In the case that the principal or immediate supervisor is the subject of the complaint, the person will bring the matter to the attention of the Director of Schools. In the event that the director is the subject of the complaint, the person will bring the matter to the Bishop.

Investigation procedure: If the complaint is regarding activity of an adult to a minor or a minor to a minor, CPS will be called immediately.

If the complaint is of an adult to an adult or a minor to an adult, the supervisor will investigate all complaints of sexual harassment. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the harassment, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred will be investigated. The investigating authority will render a determination. If the person complaining of harassment is not satisfied with the findings, then appeal may be made through the Personnel Appeal Process outlined in # 4145.

4176

REPORTING A CONCERN TO CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)

All schools will adhere to the Texas Family Code about reporting possible cases of child abuse or neglect. A person having "cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect" will report the case to Child Protective Services (CPS). The

person making the call will get a case number and the name of the person from CPS who received the call. A report may also be made to the local law enforcement authorities.

The person making the report will write a confirmation letter to CPS, including in the letter the case number and the person from CPS who took the call. A copy of the confirmation letter will be retained at the school and a copy will be sent to the Director of Catholic Schools.

4190

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY (AIDS)

Decisions affecting assignment of employees who have tested positive for human immune deficiency virus (HIV) or who have been diagnosed with AIDS Related Complex (ARC) and/or AIDS will be made on a case-by-case basis in cooperation with physicians, and public health officials. Regulations regarding personnel who have HIV, ARC, and AIDS are based on current knowledge and law and are subject to continual review.

4195

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Employees with communicable diseases, acute or chronic, will be subject to the following provisions:

Confirmation of the condition – by one of the following

- The employee brings the information to the attention of legitimate authority,
- The employee confirms the information when asked, or
- The employee submits to medical examination,

Medical factors -- The principal or director will seek medical advice from local health authorities or private physicians on the following where applicable

- The nature of the risk, i.e., how the disease was transmitted,
- The duration of the risk, i.e., how long the employee will be infectious,
- The severity of the risk, i.e., what is the potential harm to third parties,
- The effect on work, i.e., does the condition interfere with performance of regular duties.

Confidentiality – The identity of the person involved is confidential and every precaution will be taken to maintain confidentiality. The principal and the Director of Schools will be informed of restrictions in duties and necessary accommodations. First aid personnel may be informed to the extent appropriate if the condition requires emergency treatment.

Exclusion from work – An employee may be excused from work if the administrator determines that the employee poses a threat to

his/her health by remaining on the job or the employee's physical condition interferes with the performance of regular duties.
Termination of employment -- Employees excluded from the work place, in accordance with this policy, may have their employment terminated when any sick leave to which they are entitled expires.

5000 SERIES: STUDENTS

5000

PRE-ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Each school will have written admission procedures for new students. This information should be shared with parent(s) or guardian(s) at the time of inquiry. This information will include, but not be limited to, the following items that are to be recorded as signed by the parent or legal guardian:

- Immunization records,
- Age level for early childhood,
- Birth certificate,
- Baptismal certificate, if Catholic,
- Legal name of student,
- Social security number of student,
- Transcript from sending school (if applicable),
- Health or physical problems needing attention,
- Parent (guardian) name, address and phone number,
- Fees and tuition requirements,
- Scholarship arrangements or tuition adjustments,
- Testing for placement (if required by local school),
- Any court order or agree for custody (if applicable),
- Agreement with parents to have a student repeat a grade or enter a grade on probation (if applicable),
- Handbook for students/parents.

5005

AGE OF ADMISSION

A child entering 3K will be three years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.

A child entering 4K will be four years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.

A child entering kindergarten will be five years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.

A child entering first grade will be six years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year or have been in first grade, or completed kindergarten in an accredited school.

The child's birth certificate, baptismal certificate or a notarized affidavit is required for verification of age.

5007

ADMISSION OF HOME SCHOOL CHILDREN

Parents of children who have been home-schooled and are seeking admission into a Catholic school will provide proper documentation to support evaluation and placement. That information will include, but not be limited to:

- Immunization records,
- Portfolio of student's work,
- Report cards (if applicable),
- Recommendation from the leadership of the home school,
- Copy of curriculum used by the home school with the student,
- Grade level/subject testing.

In addition, standardized testing or admission testing may be required. Parents may be asked to pay for testing that is administered by another agency. The school reserves the right to place the student in the grade or course that is deemed appropriate.

5010

ATTENDANCE

Each school will be in session according to the number of days required by TCCED standards.

The local school will set opening and closing times for a school day. TCCED standards, regarding the bell-to-bell schedule, shall be maintained.

5011

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Each student will attend classes for a minimum of 90% of the attendance days of a given school year in order to be promoted to the following grade level.

A student who does not attend 90% of the attendance days of a given school year may be required to repeat the grade. Parents of any student missing more than 10% of school sessions will have to meet with the Director of Schools to request a waiver of the attendance regulation.

5013

ABSENCES

Each school will comply with TCCED standards regarding absences. The local school will develop policies regarding excessive absences. This will be communicated to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year. Written notification will be sent to parents/guardians of a student whose continued absence endangers the student's progress/promotion.

5015

ADMISSION – TRANSFER STUDENT

1. Credit and records: Schools of the Diocese honor credits and records from all officially accredited elementary and secondary schools.

2. Placement: The principal will make the appropriate grade placement based on relevant information including the recommendation of the previous school.
3. Catholic School transfers: The transfer is contingent on meeting all withdrawal requirements at the sending school and the entrance requirements of the receiving school.

5021

STUDENT RELEASE, DURING SCHOOL HOURS, FROM SCHOOL

Students will be released only to custodial parents, legal guardians, or adults authorized by the parent/legal guardian. The custodial parents/legal guardian will provide the authorization for such release.

5022

ACCESS TO STUDENTS

Each school will publish local policies and procedures that ensure the safety and security of all students.

5023

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Each school will develop practices and procedures regarding visitors.

5024

STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS

Schools will comply with immunization requirements established by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department. Conscientious objections/waivers are not accepted in schools of the Diocese. Immunizations are not in conflict with Catholic faith.

A school will have on file a permanent health card and an emergency information form for each student.

5025

VISION/HEARING/SPINAL SCREENING

Each school will provide vision, hearing and spinal screening for students annually as specified by the Texas Department of Health.

5030

MEDICATION USAGE AND DISTRIBUTION

Only medication, which is necessary for the child to remain at school, will be given during school hours. Whenever possible, administration of medication to students should take place at home.

Only medication prescribed by a licensed physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant will be administered by authorized school personnel. The school will have signed parental consent in order to dispense non-prescription medication.

Medication received in an unlabeled container or plastic bag will not be accepted.

No stock medication will be kept in the clinic for student use.

Substitution of medication from one student's supply for another is never permitted.

Most medications have expiration dates. These dates must be followed.

The parent is responsible to bring all medication to the clinic/office, and to pick up unused medicine or it will be destroyed. The school will not keep medication from year to year.

Administration of medication will be recorded on a medication log with date, time, and initials of the person giving the medication. The student is responsible for coming to the clinic/office and asking for his/hers medication.

Non-medical personnel will not be responsible for the administration of nebulizer treatment of asthma.

5035

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Each school will follow guidelines provided by The Texas Department of Health "Communicable Disease Chart for Schools and Child-Care Centers". Each school will use the list provided by The Texas Department of Health "Reportable Diseases in Texas" to determine how to deal with the condition.

5036

CONFIDENTIALITY – COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Knowledge that a student has a reportable disease will be confined to those with a direct need-to-know, e.g., the principal, teacher, coordinator of health services, etc. The school can release information, with parental/guardianship approval, only to physicians, nurses, and other health care personnel who have a legitimate need to know in order to provide healing for the student. Parents/guardians will provide approval in writing and shall specify the persons or positions to whom the information may be released. Any person receiving such information will be aware of confidentiality.

5037

SCHOOL CLINIC RECORDS

The school will have on file a daily clinic log and a daily medication log.

5045**TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

No student shall possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or any controlled substance while on school premises or at any parish/school sponsored activity.

5046**DISCIPLINE FOR TOBACCO, ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE**

Each school will establish and publish disciplinary procedures that deal with students who violate the tobacco, alcohol substance abuse policy. A controlled substance is defined as: (1) any drug listed in the current Federal Controlled Substance Act; (2) alcohol or any alcoholic beverage; (3) unauthorized abusable glue, aerosol paint, or other chemical substance for inhalation; (4) any other intoxicant or mood-altering or behavior altering drug; (5) drug paraphernalia.

5050**SEARCHES**

School administrators are entitled to search school lockers and personal possessions. Another faculty/staff member will witness the search.

5060**STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Each school will have a written discipline code published in the student/parent handbook and in the teacher handbook. The code will include a policy regarding suspension and expulsion.

5061**SUSPENSION**

The principal or a person designated by the principal is the only school official that may place a student in suspension.

5062**EXPULSION**

The principal is the only person authorized who may expel a student. Before that decision is made, there will be a three-day suspension before the principal reaches the final expulsion decision.

The pastor will be informed of the impending expulsion. The Director of Schools will be informed of the impending expulsion. A written notification will be sent to the Director of Schools after the final decision is reached.

5063**STUDENT SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

Students will not engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment toward other students or school employees. Sexual harassment is a major breach and will result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

5065**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances.

5070**STUDENT MARRIAGE**

The principal, in consultation with a priest and with full pastoral discretion, will determine if the married student(s) will remain in school.

5072**STUDENTS WHO ARE BECOMING PARENTS**

Impending parenthood shall be supported with compassion. A student who is becoming a parent will not necessarily be asked to leave the school.

5080**STUDENT PROGRESS**

Time will be made available to report student progress to parents/guardians. At least once each semester special time will be set aside for progress report meetings. Meetings that are more frequent will be provided for parents/guardians of students experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulty.

5082**GRADE LEVEL ADVANCEMENT**

Requirements for advancement to the next level will be clearly stated in student/parent handbook.

5083**ACCELERATION**

The principal is empowered to grant or deny permission to accelerate a student.

5084**ALGEBRA IN ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT**

A student in the eighth grade, taught a full course of Algebra I by a qualified math teacher, is eligible to take an Algebra I Competency test that may be administered by the Catholic high school accepting the eighth grade student. Successful completion of this test allows the student to begin second-year math at a Catholic high school. Other subject areas are left up to the determination of the high school principal.

5085**RETENTION**

Retention should be used with caution and only after careful consideration.

---The following policy is designed to identify a student's learning needs for academic success:

- At any time during the school year and preferably before the end of the first quarter, when a student is identified as being unsuccessful in his/her

core subjects according to established indicators (academic performance, attendance records, observed relationships with faculty, staff, peers, etc.) the following steps will be taken:

- A Child Study Team will be formed
 1. The team will be composed of the principal, parent(s)/guardian, core classroom teachers, school counselor, and other teachers as deemed necessary. Where possible, the team will also include a learning specialist, social worker and/or others involved in the child's education.
- The team will:
 1. Gather pertinent data. The data will include all factors and circumstances that influence student performance and well-being.
 2. Recommend psychological and other testing when appropriate.
 3. Consider all alternatives to grade-level retention.
 4. Develop an Intervention Plan to identify a student's learning needs. The team will develop a series of expectations and appropriate instructional strategies for the student. The team will monitor progress to ensure the plan is effective, individualized, and adjusted as needed.
 5. Benchmark and document the student's progress at least every six weeks after implementation of the Intervention Plan.
 6. Recommend no later than one week after the completion of the third quarter of the school year an:
 - IPP – Individual Promotion Plan with Modification
 - IRP – Individual Retention Plan with Modification

The decision to retain rests with the school principal. This decision will be forwarded to the parents/guardians and to the Director of Schools. A copy of the decision will be retained in the student's cumulative file.

5091

REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS

Each school will determine, according to its philosophy, a manner in which quarterly report cards will be shared with parents/guardians and students. Parents/guardians and students will be aware of progress in a way that will be most beneficial to all concerned. Mid-quarter conferences are encouraged.

5095

PARENT/GUARDIAN GRIEVANCE

If a parent/guardian has a grievance against a teacher or an employee of the school, the following is the method of making that grievance known:

1. The parent/guardian will first go to the one with whom the difficulty exists and make an effort to resolve the difference.
2. If resolution is unsuccessful, the grievant will then go to the principal and make the grievance known.

3. If resolution is unsuccessful, the grievant will have the principal set up an appointment for the grievant with the Director of Schools. The meeting will be set within five working days of contact with the Director. The opinion of the Director of Schools is final.

5100

GRADUATION

Requirements stated in the accreditation handbook of TCCED will be fulfilled by each student before the formal status of “graduation” is conferred.

5110

CUMULATIVE RECORDS

A cumulative record form will be maintained for every student in the school. This record remains permanently in the school files.

5111

CUMULATIVE RECORDS CONTENT

The principal is responsible for maintaining records in a professional manner. Cumulative records will be accurate, current and void of any subjective anecdotal comments. The cumulative folder on each pupil will contain the following:

1. Attendance history of the named student,
2. Results of all standardized testing,
3. Student academic grades while attending the school.

These records must be kept indefinitely and in fireproof files. Periodic examination of students’ files will be made, not only to update them but also to delete obsolete information.

5115

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Each school will establish a method and procedure for maintaining attendance records.

5130

RELEASE OF STUDENT RECORDS

Unless legally bound to do so, no information from students’ records will be released to non-educational agencies without the consent of the parents/guardians. These agencies may include, but not be limited to police and parole offices, personnel officers, and employment agencies.

5135

WITHDRAWAL RECORDS

When a student withdraws from school, the student’s health record and a copy of the student’s cumulative record should be forwarded to the school of transfer upon the request of that school. The original cumulative record is kept permanently in the school files.

5140

SUBPOENAS

Parental/guardian approval of subpoenaed records is not necessary. Only subpoenaed records are released. The principal will handle the all activities relative to any subpoena.

6000 SERIES: INSTRUCTION

6000

ACCREDITATION

All Catholic schools in Texas are accredited by TCCED. Accreditation standards formulated by TCCED are final and will be adhered to in all designated principles, standards, and procedures. Diocesan curriculum standards/policies will be strictly followed.

6010

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME REQUIREMENTS

Pre-school programs (3K, 4K) shall follow instructional time requirements as set forth by TCCED.

Elementary schools (K-8) shall follow instructional time requirements as set forth by TCCED.

Secondary schools (9-12) shall follow instructional time requirements as set forth by TCCED.

These requirements are enumerated in *Accreditation Manual for Catholic Schools in Texas*.

6020

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Each school will submit a proposed annual school calendar to the CSO for review no later than April 15. No school may begin classes for students prior to the Wednesday prior to the last Monday of August. Each school will adhere to the required school calendar standards as set for by TCCED. CSO will review and verify TCCED standards and then validate the school calendar before the school's communication of the calendar to the school public.

During the course of the school year, calendar changes may be necessary. CSO shall be notified of all changes on the annual school calendar.

6025

FULL AND HALF-DAY ATTENDANCE

A student will be in class at least two hours to be considered in attendance for one-half day. A student will be in class at least four hours (PK-8) or four class periods (9-12) to be considered in attendance for one full day. A full day in school shall meet TCCED "Bell to Bell" requirements

6030

SUMMER SCHOOL

Any accredited school may hold summer school for make-up work or for enrichment. The school offering summer school sets criteria for admission to a summer school program. The principal determines criteria for completion of the academic requirements in the summer school program.

6040**STUDENT NEEDS**

All students will have full and equitable opportunities to achieve mastery in academic areas. Each school will recognize and emphasize individual differences among students. Each school will make provisions for a respect and recognition of various learning styles to the extent the school is able to do so.

6050**CLASS SIZE**

The local school will employ a sufficient number of qualified teachers to maintain the required teacher/student ratio. Class size is as follows:

- 3K-4K 15-18 students with one teacher
 19-25 students with one teacher and one full-time paraprofessional
- K 22 students with one teacher or
 23+ students with one teacher and one full-time paraprofessional.
- 1-3 25 students
- 4-12 28 students

Non-compliance with class size must have the approval of the Director of Schools.

6055**HOMEWORK**

Each school will establish and publish a local policy concerning homework/makeup work.

6060**FIELD TRIPS**

Teachers are encouraged, with principal approval and parental/guardian permission, to plan educational experiences beyond the classroom. Field trips will be carefully planned and supported by the local school directives about methods and means of such outings. Overnight, out-of-town trips are discouraged for elementary students. In planning field trips, the following will be considered:

- Any trip taken will be curriculum related.
- Individual parents who drive may be liable. They will show proof of liability insurance.
- Each parent will sign a release for his/her child to ride with a designated adult if the child is not riding in transportation that is provided by the school.
- The Diocese assumes no financial responsibility or liability for injuries that occur to students riding in vehicles provided either by the school or by individuals.
- Student learning time and teacher work hours will not be interrupted for fund raising activities to sponsor a field trip.

- If rental transportation is being used, the person responsible for the trip will be informed of insurance coverage from the company leasing the transportation vehicle.
- Employees or agents of the school will not transport students to or from school in personal vehicles.
- If a school or parish owned vehicle is being used, the principal is responsible and must have assurance either from the pastor or the Diocesan Business Office of insurance coverage on the vehicle.

A parent authorization form will be on file in the principal's office before any field trip. Information should include the date signed as well as the date of the trip, personal expenses associated with the trip, means of transportation, destination, and probable time of return. The authorization slip will not exonerate a teacher from responsibility for each student. The person in charge of the trip will have with them during the trip:

- First aid equipment,
- Copy of the school's emergency plan with them,
- Signed permission slips.

6070

TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The principal and the faculty will jointly make the selection of textbooks, learning material and equipment. Guidelines for selection will include the school's objectives and organizational patterns, the needs of individual students, and the financial resources of the school.

6080

LIBRARY AND MEDIA RESOURCES

TCCED standards will be followed in elementary and secondary schools.

6085

COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Copyright laws as related to printed materials, music, and audio-visuals, including computer software will be followed.

6090

TECHNOLOGY

Each school will create a long-range technology plan to give direction to the acquisition of technology equipment.

6100

STUDENT ASSESSMENT – GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Student progress will be assessed at the local level. Acceptable mode of assessment will include, but not be limited to, written testing, oral performance testing, observation, and cooperative group testing.

6102**EARLY LITERACY ASSESSMENT**

To be in support of federal law which states that all children will be reading on grade level by Third Grade (NCLB) each elementary school will perform systematic assessment of students at the primary level. The results of that assessment will be reported to CSO for compilation and planning. The assessment instrument used will be determined at the local level. A comprehensive list is available at <http://www.sedl.org/reading/rad/states.html>

The components that must be assessed are by grade level:

Kindergarten – Phonemic Awareness (Alphabet Knowledge), Phonics, Vocabulary, and Comprehension

First Grade and Second Grade – Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Comprehension and Fluency

All kindergarten and first grade students will be assessed.

Beginning of School (within first three weeks for *Instructional Planning*)

January – any time during the month for *Progress Monitoring*

End of School – Mid-April to Mid-May for *Summative Report*

Any struggling second grade reader will also be assessed.

6105**ACHIEVEMENT TESTS**

Each elementary school will annually administer the designated achievement tests scheduled by CSO. SAT 10 and OLSAT 8 is required for grades 3,5,7.

6107**RELIGION ASSESSMENT**

Each school will comply with the CSO guidelines for annual assessment of Religious knowledge.

6110**CURRICULUM – COURSE OF STUDIES**

The CSO, in collaboration with teachers in the Diocese of Dallas Catholic Schools, develops an elementary school curriculum and a mastery checklist that will be used by each school. The curriculum incorporates national and state standards, current research, and accepted practices in each content area. Each teacher will receive a scope and sequence and a mastery checklist of objectives for each subject area that is taught. Any variation of curriculum will be used only with the approval of the Director of Schools.

6111**CURRICULUM - DOCUMENTATION OF MASTERY**

The teacher will provide documentation supporting 80% mastery of curriculum objectives for each subject taught. The principal will monitor mastery lists.

6112

EARLY CHILDHOOD: 3K - 4K

Preschool programs that are part of an elementary school will follow requirements and guidelines set forth by TCCED and by the CSO.

6120

EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Each school will make the final decision regarding placement of students or continuation of students in relation to available services.

6130

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The principal will be the ultimate authority for student activities carried out in the school's name. Each activity will be age appropriate. The principal will intervene if the activity is deemed inappropriate.

6140

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

The Extended Day Program in each school will comply with guidelines set forth by TCCED and recorded in *An Accreditation Manual for Catholic Schools in Texas*.

6150

HONORS PROGRAMS

Each secondary school will determine criteria for students to be eligible for honors courses. Such courses will be noted on the report card and on the student transcript.

6160

SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION

Each school will establish and implement a substance abuse education program at all grade levels.

6170

GRADUATION/COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Each school will develop graduation and/or commencement exercises to be celebrated at the conclusion of pre-school, kindergarten, and eighth grade in a simple dignified manner. A more elaborate ceremony will be held at the conclusion of high school work.